

REMARKS***Summary of the Amendment***

Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 14 and 15 will have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 18, 19 and 31 will be pending with claims 18 and 19 being in independent form.

Summary of the Official Action

In the instant Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 15 as being indefinite. Additionally, claims 14 and 15 were rejected over the art of record. Finally, the Examiner indicated that claims 18, 19 and 31 were allowed. By the present amendment and remarks, Applicant submits that the rejections have been overcome, and respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application.

Acknowledgment of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant acknowledges and appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 18, 19 and 31 are allowed. Accordingly, as all of the rejected claims have been canceled and as the application now only contains claims which are allowed, Applicant requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued in the instant application so that the case can proceed to issuance.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph, is moot

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claim is indefinite, Applicant submits that this rejection is moot inasmuch as the above-noted claim has been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejection is requested.

The Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is moot

Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 06-114318 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,989,622 to IWASHITA et al.

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 06-114318 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,989,622 to IWASHITA et al. and U.S. Patent No. 5,540,774 to SMITHERMAN.

While Applicant disagrees that the above-noted claims are properly rejected over these documents, Applicant submits that these rejections are moot inasmuch as the above-noted claims have been canceled.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the above-noted rejections is requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious the Applicant's invention, as recited in each of the pending claims. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

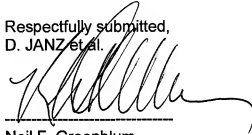
Further, any amendments to the claims which have been made in this response and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art,

should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Authorization is hereby given to refund excess payments and charge any additional fee necessary to have this paper entered to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Respectfully submitted,
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